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Amendments To The Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A message processing device in an inter-vehicle network of a plurality of message processing devices located in respective vehicles for transferring messages among the vehicles, each message processing device comprising:

a message receiving unit for receiving a message having a body including data to be transmitted and a header including a valid time duration and, a valid geographical zone, a body including data to be transmitted, and a flag, the flag being set when the message reaches the valid geographical zone;

a duration determination unit for determining whether or not the message is within the valid time duration when the message receiving unit receives the message;

a zone determination unit for determining whether or not the message processing device is located within the valid geographical zone when the message receiving unit receives the message;

a message transferring unit for transferring the message to at least one other message processing device when the duration determination unit ~~gives a positive result~~ and the zone determination unit give positive results, or when the duration determination unit gives a positive result, the zone determination unit gives a negative result, and the flag is not set; and

an application processing unit for reading out data included in the body to execute predetermined processing based on the data when the duration determination unit ~~and the zone determination unit gives a positive results,~~ wherein the predetermined processing is other than transferring the message.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A message processing device according to claim ~~21~~, further comprising:

a position detecting unit for detecting a current location of the message processing device,

wherein the determination of the zone determination unit is based on a detection result of the position detecting unit.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) A message processing device in a network of message processing devices, each message processing device comprising:
a message receiving unit for receiving a message having a body including data to be transmitted and a header including information specifying a valid geographical zone, and a body including data to be transmitted, and a flag, the flag being set when the message reaches the valid geographical zone;

a zone determination unit for determining whether or not the message processing device is located within the valid geographical zone when the message receiving unit receives the message;

a message transferring unit for transferring the message to at least one other message processing device when the zone determination unit gives a positive result, or when the zone determination unit gives a negative result and the flag is not set; and

an application processing unit for reading out data included in the body to execute predetermined processing based on the data when the zone determination unit gives a positive result, wherein the predetermined processing is other than transferring the message.

7. (Original) A message processing device according to claim 6, further comprising:

a position detecting unit for detecting a current location of the message processing device,

wherein the determination of the zone determination unit is based on a detection result by the position detecting unit.

8. (Currently amended) A message processing device in a network of message processing devices, each message processing device comprising:
a valid duration setting unit for setting a valid time duration for a message;
a zone setting unit for setting a valid geographical zone;
an application processing unit for generating data to be transmitted; and
a message transmitting unit for transmitting a message having a body including the data generated by the application processing unit and a header including the valid time duration set by the valid duration setting unit and, the valid geographical zone set by the zone setting unit, a body including the data generated by the application processing unit, and a flag, the flag being set when the message reaches the valid geographical zone;

whereby the valid time duration ~~is and~~ valid geographical zone are checked by a message processing device receiving the message to determine whether to transfer the message to at least one other message processing device and execute predetermined processing based on the data in the message body, wherein the predetermined processing is other than transferring the message;

the message being transferred when the message is received within the valid time duration and within the valid geographical zone, or when the message is received within the valid time duration and is not received within the valid geographical zone and the flag is not set, and the predetermined processing being executed when the message is received within the valid time duration and within the valid geographical zone.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently amended) The message processing device of claim 8⁴, wherein the zone setting unit sets a range between intersections along a road as the valid geographical zone when a plurality of the intersections are specified.

11. (Currently amended) The message processing device of claim 98, wherein the zone setting unit sets a range of a road specified by a road name as the valid geographical zone when the road name is specified.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) The message processing device of claim 428, wherein the zone setting unit sets a range between intersections along a road as the valid geographical zone when a plurality of the intersections are specified.

14. (Currently amended) The message processing device of claim 428, wherein the zone setting unit sets a range along a road specified by a road name as the valid geographical zone when the road name is specified.

15. (Currently amended) A message processing device in an inter-vehicle network of a plurality of message processing devices located in respective vehicles for transferring messages among the vehicles, each message processing device comprising:

- a zone setting unit for setting a valid geographical zone for a message;
- an application processing unit for generating data to be transmitted; and
- a message transmitting unit for transmitting a message having a body including the data generated by the application processing unit and a header including information specifying the valid geographical zone set by the zone setting unit and a body including the data generated by the application processing unit, and a flag, the flag being set when the message reaches the valid geographical zone;

whereby the valid geographical zone is checked by a message processing device receiving the message to determine whether to transfer the message to at least one other message processing device and execute predetermined processing based on the data in the message body, wherein the predetermined processing is other than transferring the message;

the message being transferred when the message is received within the valid geographical zone, or when the message is not received within the valid

geographical zone and the flag is not set, and the predetermined processing being executed when the message is received within the valid geographical zone.

16. (Previously presented) The message processing unit of claim 15, wherein the zone setting unit sets a range between intersections along a road as the valid geographical zone when a plurality of the intersections are specified.

17. (Previously presented) The message processing unit of claim 15, wherein the zone setting unit sets a range of a road specified by the road name as the valid geographical zone when the road name is specified.

18. (Previously presented) The message processing device in claim 15, wherein the zone setting unit sets a geographical range specified by an administrative district name as the valid geographical zone when the administrative district name is specified.

19. (Previously presented) The message processing device in claim 15, wherein the zone setting unit sets a geographical range enclosed by a plurality of points as the valid geographical zone when a plurality of the points are specified.

20. (Previously presented) The message processing device according to claim 15, further comprising:

a navigation device for displaying a map,

wherein the zone setting unit sets the valid geographical zone through a map display screen displayed by the navigation device.